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Roanoke Valley-Alleghany

REGIONAL
commission

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MINUTES

The January Executive Committee Meeting of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission was held on Thursday, January 27, 2022 at 11:45 a.m. at the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission office located at 313 Luck Ave., SW, Roanoke, VA.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Chairman Phil North called the meeting to order at 11:45 a.m. and welcomed those in attendance.

Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission Executive Committee Members: Present: Phil North, Roanoke County; Dean Martin, Roanoke County; Billy Martin, Botetourt County and Mayor Grose, Town of Vinton.

OTHERS/GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE

Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission Staff: Jeremy Holmes and Sherry Dean.

2. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Dean Martin motioned, Mr. Billy Martin made a second and the consent agenda was approved by voice vote.

3. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

A. Audit Request for Proposal:

Jeremy Holmes reported an RFP had been issued for auditing services and only one proposal had been received. The proposal was from Robinson, Farmer, Cox who has provided audit services to the Commission over the past few years consistently.

Member Governments: Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin and Roanoke, Cities of Covington, Roanoke and Salem, Towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount and Vinton



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Normally the Commission would have a committee review and score the proposals and make a recommendation to the board to accept but, with only having one proposal, the Executive Committee could choose to review the proposal themselves. Ms. Dean reported the price of the audit in the proposal is \$12,100 which is an increase over the previous year's price that was \$11,700. Mayor Grose asked if staff were satisfied with the auditor's work and Ms. Dean said yes. Ms. Dean reported the price increase could be due to the auditors anticipating the Commission will have more federal money which requires the auditors to do more audit work, as our budget does show the Commission does have that level of federal dollars to require the extra audit work. Although, with having three positions open, the Commission may not spend all their federal money budget to reach the level which requires the extra audit work and some of that federal spending could fall into the next fiscal year.

Mr. North asked if the audit includes Collective Response and Ms. Dean stated it did. Mr. Holmes noted all the Collective Response funds are federal money. Mr. North inquired as to how Collective Response would be supported when that funding ran out and Mr. Holmes noted it was up to the Collective Response team to determine future funding to continue their operations. There are a number of grants Collective Response is looking at and there was some expectation they would receive funding from the big opioid settlement, where several billion dollars would be appropriated to states to assist with opioid issues, but recently a judge threw out that settlement. There is still expectation funding will flow down from that lawsuit at some point.

Mr. North asked for a motion to proceed with the audit proposal; Mayor Grose motioned; Mr. Dean Martin made a second and the motion passed on a voice vote. Mr. Holmes noted the audit proposal will go to the February Commission meeting.

B. FY2023 Work Program:

Mr. Holmes reported the Work Program Committee will be meeting this afternoon after the Commission meeting. At the last Executive Committee, we talked about and approved looking at the work program process and changes to it. He will talk to the Work Program Committee today about them taking on a more strategic role in helping to set regional goals on what the Commission should be doing each year. Another goal would be to allow the Commission to build in more flexibility so the Commission could adapt and meet changing needs as those occurred, as well as engaging localities more. Engaging town managers and county administrators more throughout the course of the year.

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Another item for the Work Program Committee is to understand how the programs are funded with the various pots of money that come in, and that a lot of the local dues and state appropriation funding is required for local match for programs. There is more and more requirement to match, for example the EDA funds require a 50% match of local funds. We certainly want to do some things to expand our capacity but about 75% of our discretionary money is tied up in local match and requirements. This leaves the equivalent of one and a quarter of a full time employee to do all of the local service and projects that we want to do. There is a little room to play around with the numbers with the Work Program Committee so they understand what some of the pressures are and to figure out how best to take project ideas to them or receive project ideas from them. Hopefully, there will be some creativity that comes out of that discussion but, at the same time, we know there are a number of deadlines, in our work program, so depending on what the committee comes back with, we still have lots of time to work with directors and CAOs to get project ideas in for February and all the other federal deadlines. We are behind, from where we usually are, but this is giving us some time to figure out what makes the most sense. Mr. North stated he thinks folks need to understand, if special funding needs to be received before a project can take place, then they need to know they can ask for a project but that a grant will need to be looked for before the project can take place and it could take a while. Mr. Holmes noted that some localities don't submit projects in January because they don't know what they will need the next year at that time. Mayor Grose noted he has always thought the Work Program Committee is really important because not only does it set down the work for the year and the tasks but it is the connection some localities have with the Commission and he is a little concerned that not everyone understands the process but it is important to take a look at the process.

Mr. North noted one thought would be to give a short presentation that is pre-recorded and a link that people could look at on their own, on how the process works. It could be made up of six or seven slides that way you can get the information out sooner rather than wait. Mr. Holmes noted there is always a balance and we are sensitive to smaller localities that don't have a planning staff and he doesn't think any radical changes will come out of looking at the process but it is always appropriate to take a moment and look at things you are doing to make sure they are accomplishing what they need to. Mr. Holmes will provide some feedback after the Work Program Committee.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Charter Amended:

Mr. Holmes reported, with Dr. Stanco Downey leaving, the charter was amended last fiscal year but we gave a year for localities to figure out how folks come off the Commission, with the hope that a lot of that would be by attrition. We will probably

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make a note, in the Commission meeting, this afternoon that the City of Roanoke can appoint someone but they would only be on the board for the four or five months that are left before that position runs out. All the numbers have to be reduced by July 1st. Our recommendation will be to just not reappoint anyone to Dr. Stanco Downy's position.

B. Open Positions:

Mr. Holmes reported the Commission has three open positions, at the moment. We are having a hard time getting applications. Two planner positions (Matt Miller and William Long who have left) and Tim Pohlad-Thomas' position who worked with Ride Solutions. We have been advertising for William's transportation planner position since December and we have received two applications for that and both of them are students still, who are in the end of their master's program. The salary range is \$45k to \$55k, as the positions were advertised as a Planner II or III position, which would be with experience. A Planner 1 position starts at \$40k. Since we are down three positions, we are balancing and prioritizing projects as best we can on federally required work. Things are moving forward and the current round of advertising ends on February 14th and we will see what we've gotten for applicants by then.

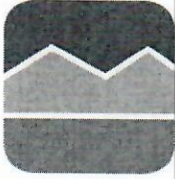
C. Resolution:

Mr. Holmes reported Delegate Rasoul called a meeting of the Collective Response last Friday and has asked the Commission to consider a resolution to support HB-105, which is funding for the Catawba Hospital for modernization of existing services but also expansion of those services on substance use and treatment. The bill is worth 3.5 million for the planning process. Mr. North noted Delegate Rasoul has in the bill to do a study as well and he has the support of Teri Austin, Bill MacNamara and Chris Head. This is a bipartisan bill for the study and to increase and improve facilities to add the Collective Response substance abuse program.

MEETING ADJORNED

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

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Submitted by:

Jeremy Holmes, Secretary,

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